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AN APPEAL

TO

THE GOOD SENSE

OF

THE HIGHER & WEALTHY ORDERS

OF

THE PEOPLE,

ON THE

HIGH PRICE OF PROVISIONS

AND OF

CORN IN PARTICULAR.

PRINTED FOR J. HATCHARD,
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WHOEVER contemplates a great nation in a time of scarcity, must immediately see how exact a resemblance it bears to a large vessel at sea, full of men, with a short stock of water or provisions, manifestly inadequate to their subsistence during the voyage to be performed.

In so small a compass as that of a ship, such a calamity is soon made known; but it is no sooner known than felt; and no sooner felt, than, by common consent, the remedy of submitting to a short allowance is called for and applied. No man's ignorance, or perverseness, or self-indulgence, is such, as that he is not awakened to an instant sense of the destruction that awaits him and, thank God! no man's interest is there at stake to blind him against his own self-preservation, or that of his unfortunate companions.

Would to Heaven that the people of every nation were so formed by nature, as to be capable of being as effectually and as speedily made

sensible of every common calamity that hung over them, and above all, that public distress could upon every occasion be equally separated from private interest. But that is not to be expected under the imperfect condition in which we exist and are placed in this world. On no account, however, should an impending or existing public calamity be attributed to any unworthy motive or conduct of private individuals, till the fact of such improper cause is proved beyond the possibility of a doubt. But, let it proceed from whatever cause it may, there is surely a remedy equally applicable, and fully in our power, under all causes and in all times of scarcity and which, more especially in so heavy a pressure as the present, the wealthy of all descriptions, but more particularly the higher ranks of the people, must conscientiously feel it their bounden duty to adopt; namely to give up their portion of the articles of food, more immediately requisite for the sustenance of the poor, and to content themselves with such other articles of subsistence as are within their reach.

To none but children, and to sick or infirm persons, is Bread an absolutely necessary article of subsistence, where other articles of food can

be afforded. Even for young children, rice in milk, is a most wholesome and nourishing diet, and might be used as a substitute for Bread, at least for one meal in the day either for breakfast or supper; at dinner, potatoes or rice are a pleasant and nutritious substitute for Bread; and a disposition to make trial of them is the only requisite.

Is it not, then, highly incumbent upon every person of high rank, and for every wealthy individual to cease to consume Flour and Bread in his own family, except for the subsistence of his children, or for breakfast, till the next harvest? But more particularly ought not the consumption of Bread and Flour to be limited to that extent at least in respect to servants, who it is feared are in the habit of always consuming more than their masters, and who stand in this peculiar situation in society with respect to the article of food, that whether it be dear or cheap, they never feel inconvenience, or care about it. In all opulent, if not in most families, men servants have meat four times a-day: but whether they be more or less indulged in that respect, they cannot say, or pretend to say they ever hunger or thirst. Surely, then, it ought not to be left to their own choice to relinquish to that class of society from which

in general they are sprung, that portion of food which they themselves cannot want, but which is absolutely necessary for the very existence of the labouring poor.

In general, the family of a hard-working labourer does not consume more than at the rate of one quartern loaf and a half per head per week, where they have nothing, or hardly any thing else to eat. Ought a servant, then, who can have meat three or four times in a day, to consume more than half a quartern loaf, if so much, per week, in addition to the meat and other food he is supplied with? A well-disposed servant, of which there certainly are many, will answer, —assuredly not.

For the same reason, and upon the same ground, is it not incumbent upon those, to whom this appeal is addressed, to abstain from another article of food which formerly the poor had the benefit of, but which is now almost confined to the wealthy, namely, *Cheese*, the commonest sort of which is as high as 10d. or 11d. per lb.; for by every one but the poor it confessedly is eaten as a luxury, and in a time of scarcity of Corn, a luxury of the worst sort, as hardly any person can eat it without Bread; and in general it provokes

the consumption of more Bread than any other article of food with which Bread is eaten.

As the object of this appeal is to apply to the good sense of every man to whom it is addressed, without the smallest desire of abridging him of what it is reasonable he should enjoy, it is humbly submitted to the discretion of the orders above alluded to, whether it might not also be proper for a time to retrench all other unnecessary expence of their tables, such as soups and made dishes, the latter of which more frequently go from their tables untouched than tasted; and the abstaining from both of which, would leave the coarser sorts of every sort of meat entirely for the use of the poor. With how much more satisfaction would every wealthy individual return to such indulgences in a time of plenty, when to abstain from them would be as unbecoming, as it will now be wise and right cheerfully to make the sacrifice of them!

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